THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND WELFARE (SHRl RAM VILAS PASWAN); (a) and (b) A few representations nave been received from Newspaper employees that they are being forced to sign agreements for foregoing the full benefits of Bachawat Wage Board recommendations. These representations have been sent to the respective State Governments for appropriate action.

According to section 13 of the working Journalists and Other Newspaper Employees (Conditions of Service) and Miscellaneous Provisons Act 1955 every working journalist is entitled to be paid by the employer, wages which shall in no case be less than the wages specified in Central Government order. This entitlement to wages continues to be protected under section 16(1) of the Act notwithstanding anything inconsistent therewith, contained in any agreement or contract of service.

3. In a set of writ petitions pending consideration in the Supreme Court, in an interim order dated January 30, 1990, the Hon'ble Court has *inter-alia* made the following observations; —

> "We hope and trust that the employees with whom settlement has been reached, as alleged, would await, the final decision of the court and not disturb the settlement. We leave the question of interest to be dealt with later".

, Problem of safety in Mines

*149. SHRI ASHWANl KUMAR; Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

Ca) whether Government are aware of the fact that the National Council of Mines Safety Staff Co-ordination Union, Dhanbad has approached Government regarding safety in Mines; and

<b) if so, what are the details thereof, and whether it is also a fact that some Members of Parliament have also approached Government in this regard and if so. how Government propose to overcome the problems of safety of the Mines?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND WELFARE (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) and (b) The National Council for Safety in Mines (NCSM) Staff Coordination Union, Dhanbad has represented against an earlier decision of the Government to wind up the National Council for Safety in Mines. This decision had been taken as the Council was unable to make itself effective owing to lack of resources. It was felt that the activities for promotion of safety in the organised sector be handled by the management of the mines concerned while the Directorate General of Mines Safety could take up the activities for the unorganised sector in the mines. Several representations including those from Members of Parliament have been received by the Government against the winding up of the Council and the matter is under review.

The Mines Act, 2952 and and the rules and regulations framed thereunder provide *inter-alia* requirements to ensure safety, health and welfare of workers and these are required to be complied with by the management concerned. According to Mines Act, the Director General of Mines Safety, (DGMS) and his ofiicers should inspect the mines periodically and take action as appropriate against persons found responsible for violation of the provisions, DGMS also issues guidelines from time to time, as may be called for, to supplement such provisions.

Extension of support price to Horticultural Crops

*150. SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state;

(a) whether Government have recently taken any decision to extend price support to horticultural crops; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?